DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 092 733 CE 001 462

AUTHOR	Blum, Robert E.
TITLE	Overview of Career Education.
PUB DATE	8 Apr 74
NOTE	32p.; A presentation to the Forum of the Council of Organizations Serving the Deaf, April 8, 1974
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.75 HC-$1.85 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS	*Career Education; Career Planning; *Concept Formation; *Educational Objectives; *Individual Development; Occupational Choice; *Occupational Clusters; Self Concept; Skill Development; Vocational Development
IDENTIFIERS	*Career Education Elements

ABSTRACT

The debate to define career education began and the nature of the concept slowly began to emerge after career education was brought to center stage by Dr. Sidney P. Marland in 1971. Career education is moving toward a focus on the working role that individuals play and is concerned with helping each individual identify, enter, and progress in a field of work that will provide maximum benefits to him, to his family, and to society. Of the several early efforts to produce a comprehensive set of goals and objectives for career education, common elements were: developing self-understanding, developing career or occupational understanding, developing general skills, establishing career plans, and pursuing career plans. The elements must be related to various growth stages of individuals in education programs. Several systems for grouping occupations have been developed to make individuals aware of the many occupations available; the occupational clustering system used by the U. S. Office of Education is the most common. To be successful in achieving its place in education, career education must have focus and direction. (Author/AG)

ED 092733

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AN OVERVIEW OF CAREER EDUCATION

A presentation made to the
Forum of the
Council of Organizations Serving the Deaf

by

Dr. Robert E. Blum

April 8, 1974

CE001462

AN OVERVIEW OF CAREER EDUCATION

Career education as an educational innovation has been under development for several years. While some states and local school districts began work on career education in the 1960's, Dr. Sidney P. Marland, then U.S. Commissioner of Education, brought it to center stage in 1971. Dr. Marland made career education the top priority in the United States Office of Education and spoke of it as a desirable way to reshape the entire educational system in our country.

While Dr. Marland was very definite about the fact that career education was to cause sweeping changes to education in America, he was purposely vague about the exact nature of career education. Speaking before the Council of Chief State School Officers in June 1971, he stated his position this way:

> Career Education cannot be defined solely in Washington. Revolution doesn't happen because government suggests it. We can ask many of the questions, we can help with funds, but if career education is to be the revolutionary instrument that the times demand it will be defined in hard and urgent debate across the land by teachers, laymen, students, and administrators in months to come. Let the debate start now.[1]

Dr. Marland did not define career education, but in speaking to various groups and preparing releases for the media, he said a good deal about the concept. Dr. Marland indicated that:

> All education is career education, or should be. And all our efforts as educators must be bent on preparing students either to become properly, usefully employed immediately upon graduation from high school, or to go on to further formal education. Anything else is dangerous nonsense.[2]

> Career education will be part of the curriculum of all students, not just some. It will continue throughout a youngster's stay in school from the first grade through senior high and beyond, if he so elects . . . . . Every student leaving school will possess the skills necessary to give him a start to making a livelihood for himself and his family, even if he leaves before completing high school.[3]

While the above statements seem to indicate an attempt to maintain our industrially oriented society, another statement shows a somewhat different point of view:

> Some young people - and perhaps there will be more as the seventies progress - are not necessarily impressed with the economic advantages implicit in work. Those young people who march to a drumbeat different from the economic rhythm of their fathers often possess a deep commitment to service of their fellowman. They too are the concern of career education, for the essential message of this program is a useful and fulfilling life.4

This statement seems to move Dr. Marland's view of career education from strictly economic fulfillment toward personal fulfillment. Other early spokesmen added new insights into the intent of career education. Dr. Robert Taylor, Director of the Center for Vocational and Technical Education at The Ohio State University, relates that:

> career education is designed to capacitate individuals for all of their life roles: economic, community, home, avocational, religious and aesthetic. Designed for all students, career education should be viewed as lifelong and pervasive, permeating the entire school program and extending beyond it. Career education is a systematic attempt to increase the career options available to individuals and to facilitate more rational and valid career planning and preparation. Through a wide range of school and community resources, young people's career horizons should be broadened and their self-awareness enhanced.5

Kenneth B. Hoyt, now Associate Commissioner for the Office of Career Education in the USOE, said of career education that it is:

> . . . the total effort of public education and the community aimed at helping all individuals to become familiar with the values of a work-oriented society, to integrate these values into their personal value systems, and to implement these values into their lives in such a way that work becomes possible, meaningful, and satisfying to each individual.6

Dr. Kieth Goldhammer, in an early writing, suggests that career education stresses the role of the school in helping each individual become capacitated so that he can develop his potential both for his own self-fulfillment and his contributing to the maintenance and healthy functioning of society.7

In reviewing the above statements and others by early spokesmen, one is left with more questions than answers.

1. Is career education all of education or only a part?
2. Is career education to prepare individuals for all of their life roles or is it to deal only with their economic role?

3. Is the emphasis to be on producing workers required to maintain our work oriented society or is it to be on helping individuals become self-fulfilled through their activities?

A Definition Emerges

As Dr. Marland suggested, the debate to define career education began and slowly, with no central guiding force, the nature of the concept began to emerge. In searching the literature, there seems to be support for the fact that career education is for all individuals of all ages but it is less than all of education. In a special report for Education U.S.A., Mr. David Smoker noted that:

> It must be provided for all students and involve the participation of all educators; it is a system designed to make available a "cradle to grave" continuum of educational opportunities to every individual.8

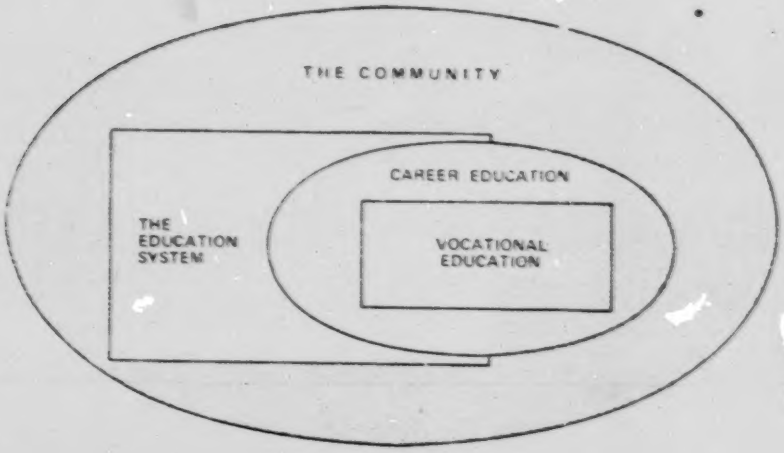
In Career Education: A Handbook for Implementation the fear that career education is merely another name for vocational education is dispelled and career education is put into perspective:

> If the primary purpose of a "liberal" education is to help a student discover himself in relationship to his society, how can the role of work and careers not be included? On the other hand, there is much of value in education which is not and should not be career oriented. As an imagery, it is as if a variety of monitors were installed within the education system. One representing the career objective would comb the entire education experience to identify those segments which could usefully contribute to career success. Other monitors would have the same assignment for citizenship, culture, family life, self-awareness, and other educational objectives.9

The relationship among career education, vocational education, the education system and the community is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Career Education's Place in Education [10]



The second question posed above asks if career education is to deal with all life roles or only the economic one. The literature seems to point toward the economic role but it also reveals that work can be defined in economic and non-economic terms and that there is an inseparable tie between one's work and the remainder of his/her life.

Several key concepts of career education are stated in Career Education: A Handbook for Implementation. Among the concepts are two that align career education with the economic role:

> 1. Preparation for successful working careers shall be a key objective of all education.
>
> 4. Preparation for careers will encompass the mutual importance of work attitudes, human relations skills, orientation to the nature of the workaday world, exposure to alternative career choices, and acquisition of actual job skills.11

Drawing career education even closer to the economic role is a statement of goals agreed upon by the United States Office of Education, the National Institute of

Education and the assistant secretary for education:

> Career Education will improve the quality of career choice.
>
> Career Education will improve individual opportunities for career entry.
>
> Career Education will improve individual opportunities for career progression.12

Career education seems to be moving toward a focus on the working role of individuals. While the usual definition of work is related to economic considerations, many people are seeing the benefit of a broader definition:

> We can come closer to a multi-dimensional definition of work if we define it as "an activity that produces something of value for other people". This definition broadens the scope of what we call work and places it within a social context. It also implies that there is purpose to work.13

With work defined broadly, it can be shown that the work one does affects every facet of his/her life and well being. Work contributes greatly to one's self-esteem. As Erich Fromm writes:

> Since modern man experiences himself both as seller and as the commodity to be sold on the market, his self-esteem depends on conditions beyond his control. If he is successful, he is valuable; if he is not, he is worthless.14

The question that individuals continually ask is "What am I doing that really matters?" Work as broadly defined provides the answer for most people. Because the purpose of this paper is to portray career education rather than justify the functions of work, a statement from Work in America will summarize the relationship between work and other life roles:

> Work also serves a number of other social purposes. The work-place has always been a place to meet people, converse, and form friendships. . . the type of work performed has always conferred a social status on the worker and the worker's family. In Industrial America, the father's occupation has been the major determinant of status, which in turn has determined the family's class standing, where they live, where the children

> went to school, and with whom the family associated - in short, the life style and life chances of all family members. (The emerging new role of women in our society may cause class standing to be co-determined by the husband's and wife's occupations.)15

While the economic role of work may be changing, the place of work, as broadly defined, remains central to the well-being of individuals and our society. It is for this reason that career education is moving toward a focus on the working role that individuals play and is concerned with helping each individual identify, enter and progress in a field of work that will provide maximum benefits to him/her, to their families (if they have families), and to society.

It may seem as though the discussion of work at the particular point at which it was interjected interrupted the flow of thought regarding the emerging concept of career education. Two of the three major questions posed earlier have been answered. The third deals with career education to maintain our work oriented society as opposed to career education to maximize self-fulfillment of individuals. The discussion of work has help to answer this question also. It seems as though one key to self-esteem is doing something that is of value to oneself and to others. Work provides this opportunity. If individuals do not find this opportunity in the economic part of their working life, they will find it in their non-economic work activities. Career education is interested in assisting individuals in defining their needs related to self-esteem and finding ways through economic and non-economic work activities to fulfill their needs. At the same time, career education is interested in showing individuals the economic related work activities that are needed to maintain our society and to prepare people to gain the maximum benefits from their paid employment.

To summarize the emerging concept of career education, the following statements can be made:

1. Career education is for all individuals of all ages.
2. Career education is more than vocational education but less than all of education.
3. Career education has a focus on the working role of individuals, but it shows the relationship between work and other life roles.
4. Career education is concerned with maximizing the self-fulfillment of individuals through economic and non-economic work activities.
5. Career education is concerned with providing the goods and services needed by people in our society.
6. Career education is the responsibility of both educational institutions and the community.

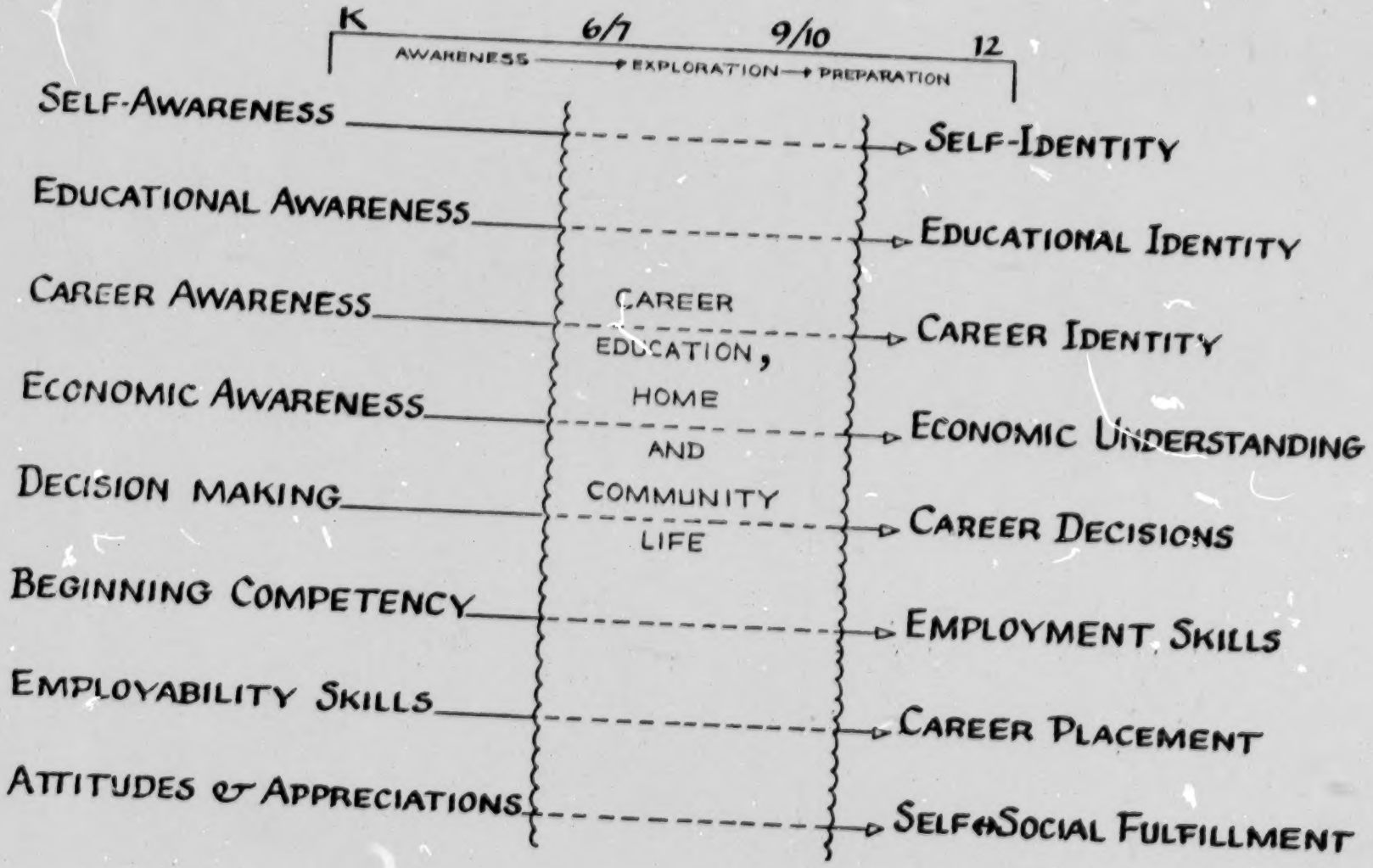
The Elements of Career Education

The debate over a definition of career education has continued and many individuals and groups have made brief verbal statements of definition. While such definitions are of interest, the true definition and understanding of the intent of an educational innovation comes from the goals and objectives that guide the development of the educational experiences provided for youngsters. It is for this reason that verbal definitions are being omitted and this discussion is moving on to an examination of the elements of career education.

During the past several years there have been several sets of goals and objectives developed. Only the major efforts will be reviewed here. One of the early efforts to produce a comprehensive set of goals and objectives for career education was undertaken by the Comprehensive Career Education Model Project (CCEM). Under the leadership of the Center for Vocational and Technical Education (CVTE) at The Ohio State University, six participating schools cooperatively wrote goals and objectives within the framework of a matrix provided by the Center. The matrix is shown in Figure 2 and the goals and objectives are reported in a

FIGURE 2

ELEMENTS OF CAREER EDUCATION



document prepared by the Westinghouse Learning Corporation entitled "Developmental Goals for the Comprehensive Career Education Model".[16] Definition and discussion of the elements is also found in the Westinghouse document.

In 1965, the National Assessment of Educational Progress began work on a set of goals and objectives for vocational education. After experiencing some difficulty in gaining agreement on a set of goals, the title was changed to career and occupational objectives and a set of goals and objectives was accepted in 1970.[17] A summary of the work done by National Assessment is shown in Figure 3.

A third major objective writing activity was conducted by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) under a contract from the Curriculum Center for Occupational and Adult Education, Bureau of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, United States Office of Education. The structure for goals and objectives produced by AIR is shown in Figure 4.[18]

The efforts described above were designed specifically to prepare instructional objectives. Another source of information regarding the elements of career education are measurement and evaluation efforts. Again there have been many attempts to assess vocational development over the years. Only one inventory will be used to represent this category of information. John O. Crites authored the Career Maturity Inventory (CMI). This is an attempt to measure the career development of individuals. The CMI is designed to be consistent with the model shown in Figure 5.[19]

Finally, the American College Testing Program undertook a study of career development. What is measured in such a study provides additional insight into the elements of career education. The outline of content for the "Nationwide Study of Student Career Development" is shown in Figure 6.[20]

FIGURE 3

SUMMARY OF

CAREER AND OCCUPATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

I. PREPARE FOR MAKING CAREER DECISIONS

II. IMPROVE CAREER AND OCCUPATIONAL CAPABILITIES

III. POSSESS SKILLS THAT ARE GENERALLY USEFUL IN THE WORLD OF WORK

IV. PRACTICE EFFECTIVE WORK HABITS

V. HAVE POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD WORK

FIGURE 4

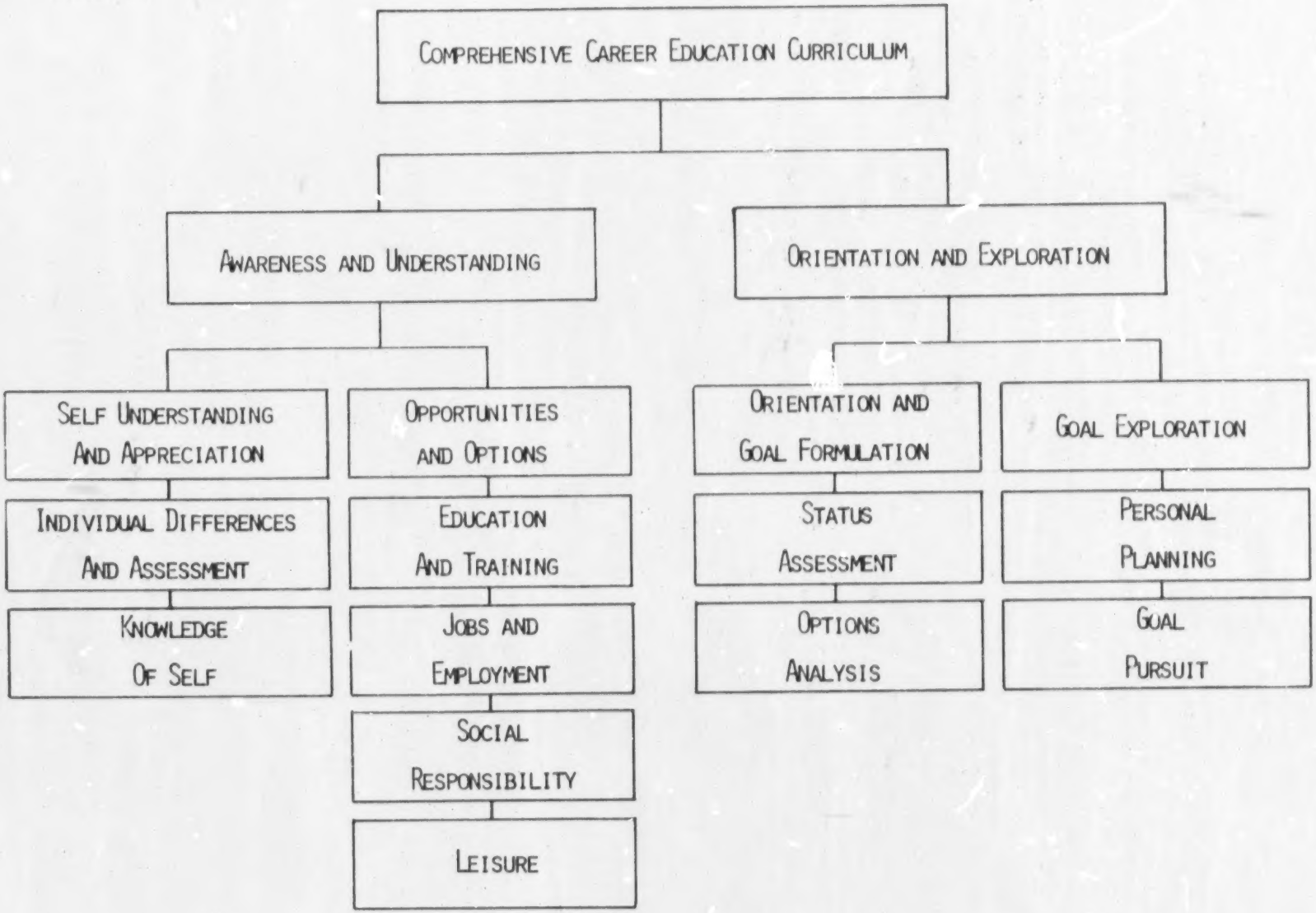

COMPREHENSIVE CAREER EDUCATION CURRICULUM
AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING
ORIENTATION AND EXPLORATION
SELF UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION
OPPORTUNITIES AND OPTIONS
ORIENTATION AND GOAL FORMULATION
GOAL EXPLORATION
INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES AND ASSESSMENT
EDUCATION AND TRAINING
STATUS ASSESSMENT
PERSONAL PLANNING
KNOWLEDGE OF SELF
JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT
OPTIONS ANALYSIS
GOAL PURSUIT
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
LEISURE

FIGURE 5

A MODEL OF CAREER MATURITY IN ADOLESCENCE

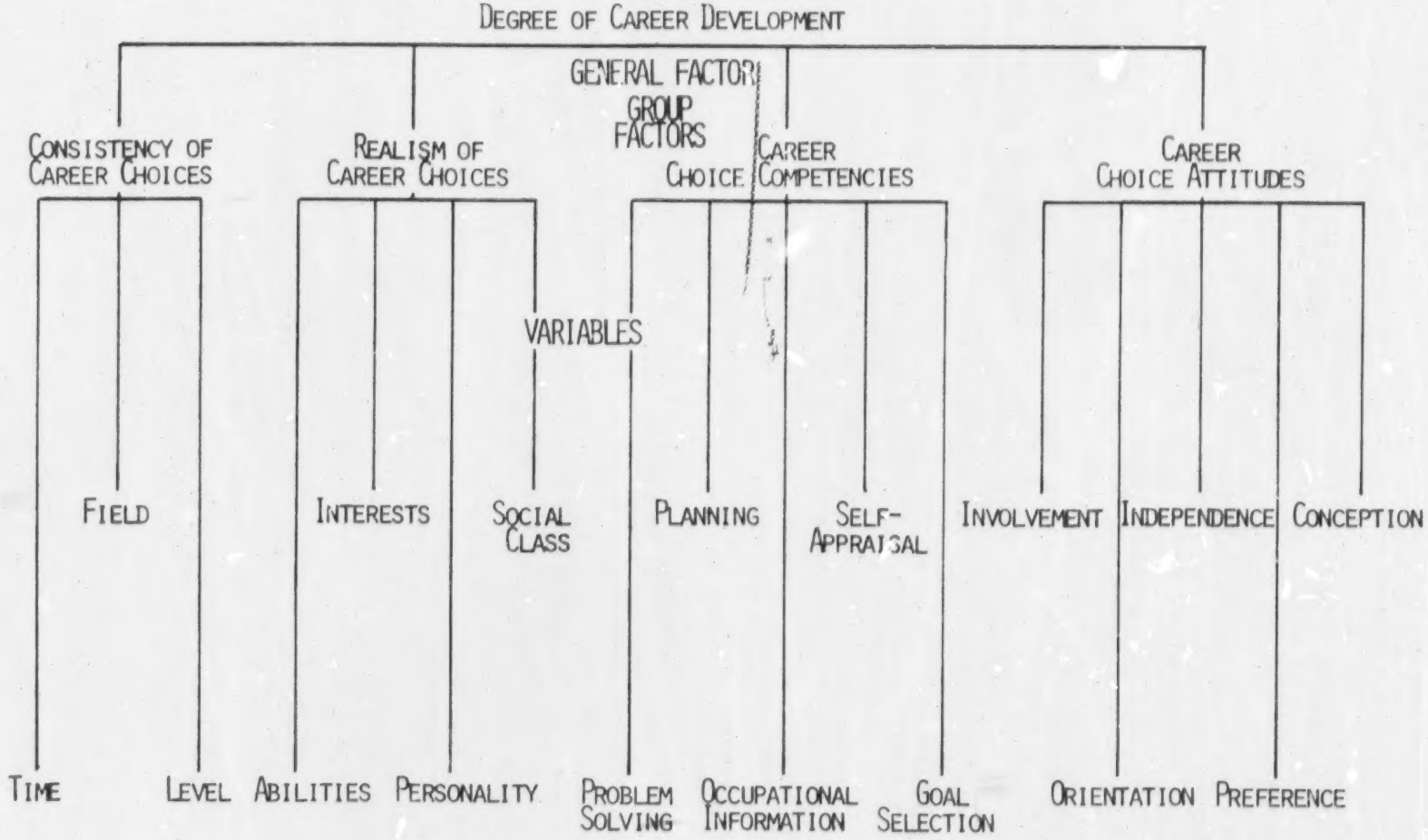


FIGURE 6

ACD CONTENT OUTLINE

I. OCCUPATIONAL AWARENESS
   A. Occupational Knowledge
   B. Exploratory Occupational Experiences

II. SELF AWARENESS
   A. Preferred Job Characteristics
   B. Career Plans

III. CAREER PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING
   A. Career Planning Knowledge
   B. Career Planning Involvement

IV. REACTIONS TO CAREER GUIDANCE EXPERIENCES

In reviewing both the structure and content of the statements mentioned above some common elements seem to emerge. The five elements that seem to encompass the ideas consistently expressed are:

- Developing self-understanding
- Developing career or occupational understanding
- Developing general skills
- Establishing career plans
- Pursuing career plans

The elements shown above have been described with a set of student outcomes for graduating high school students by our career education staff in Jefferson County[21]

Moving Toward Self and Societal Fulfillment

The elements stated above seem to be in concert with the statements made earlier in summary of the concept of career education. The five elements are applicable to individuals of all ages. This is particularly true in a society in which change is very rapid. The elements imply more than traditional vocational education which is preparation for a specific job. They imply some comprehensive understandings of oneself, work for economic and non-economic purposes, and conscious planning and implementation of career goals. The elements certainly imply an understanding of the interrelationships of all life roles in the career planning process and they are meant to maximize both self-fulfillment and fulfillment of societal needs.

While the elements presented above seem to be adequate to describe the thrust of career education, no attempt has been made to this point to relate the elements to developmental levels. In using the elements to plan educational

programs, they must be related to the various growth stages of individuals.

A very simple description of the growth stages is presented in Career Education and shown here in Figure 7.[22] The awareness stage at the elementary level implies awareness of self, occupational opportunities, career planning and the relationship of general skills to self and occupations. Little if any career planning and implementation is actually done. During the exploration stage, individuals look in greater depth at themselves and occupations and begin to formulate preferences that lead to career goals. During this stage, individuals may formulate, explore, evaluate and reformulate goals several times. Following exploration, individuals begin to implement their career plans by entering and progressing in work endeavors. The awareness, exploration, implementation process may be used over and over during one's lifetime.

A more complex description of the same process is contained in the literature on career (vocational, occupational) development. Super and others have proposed vocational life stages that somewhat parallel those suggested above. A summary of their ideas is presented in Figure 8.[23] The stages presented

Figure 8

Vocational Life Stages

I. Growth Stage (Birth-14)

Self-concept develops through identification with key figures in family and in school; needs and fantasy are dominent early in this stage; interest and capacity become more important in this stage. With increasing social participation and reality testing.

II. Exploration Stage (15-24)

Self-examination; role tryouts, and occupational exploration take place in school, leisure activities, and part-time work.

III. Establisiment Stage (25-44)

Having found an appropriate field, effort is put forth to make a permanent place in it. There may be some trial early in this stage, with consequest shifting, but establishment may begin without trial, especially in the professions.

IV. Maintenance Stage (45-64)

Having made a place in the world of work, the concern is now to hold it. Little new ground is broken, but there is continuation along established lines.

V. Decline Stage (65 on)

As physical and mental powers decline, work activity changes and in due course ceases. New roles must be developed; first that of selective participant and then that of observer rather than participant.

were developed as a framework for research and are not intended to describe a specific vocational development of any individual. The important insight gained from examining the vocational life stages is the emphasis on oneself in relationship to one's occupational and other roles.

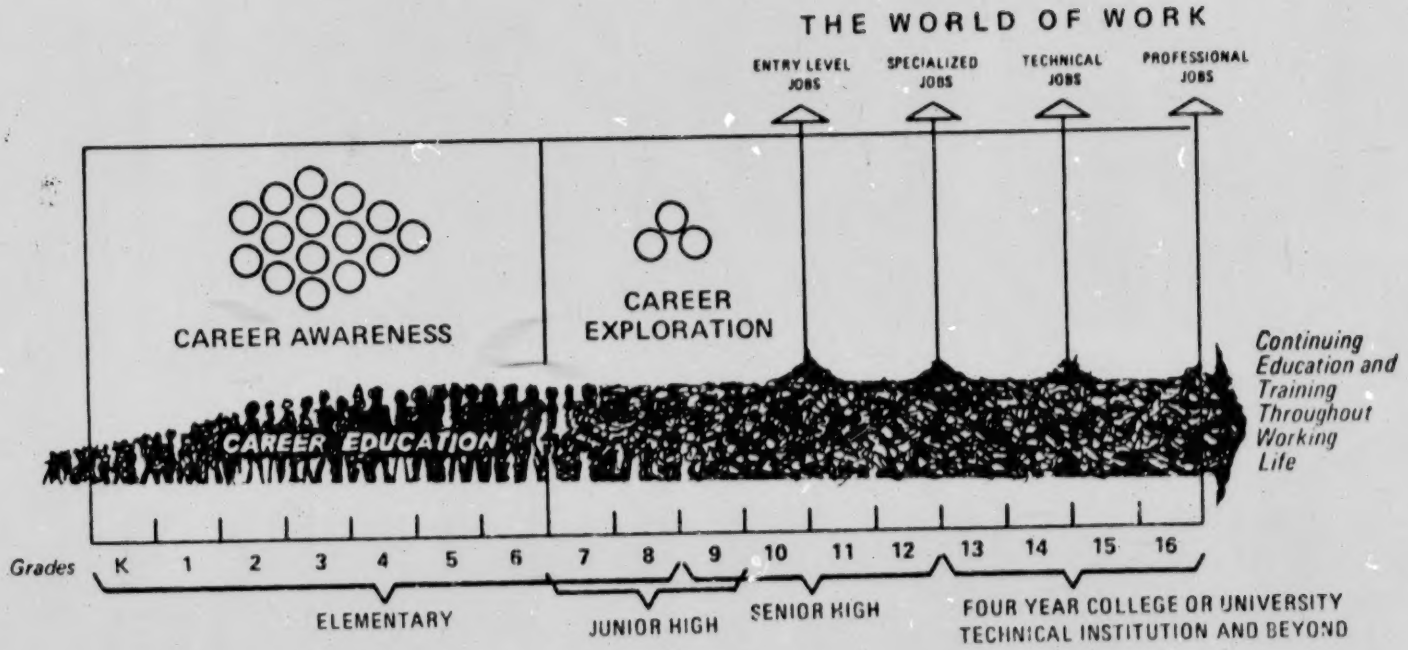
Self-understanding in Career Education

As pointed up in the earlier discussions of career education, one important facet is self-fulfillment of individuals. Subsequently, one important element in career education was presented as developing self-understanding. In discussing growth stages, it became clear that the individual and his/her self-concept are important to the chain of events in one's life.

One theory of vocational development is a self-concept theory. This theory maintains that individuals continually modify their self-concepts and occupational

FIGURE 7

GROWTH STAGES FOR CAREER EDUCATION



concepts to bring the two into agreement. In other words they are constantly attempting to see themselves in an occupational role that is consistent with their self-concept.[24]

A logical but less well documented argument for the importance of self-understanding relates to self-fulfillment. It may be assumed that if one is to be self-fulfilled, then it is essential to know what is needed and wanted as well as the abilities that one has to attempt to fulfill one's needs and wants.

Having touched on the importance of self-understanding, it seems appropriate to discuss briefly the nature of self-understanding. As has been pointed up in the stages of vocational development, needs, interests are the primary determinants of aspirations and activities during the early years. As time goes on capacities, values and opportunities are considered in establishing aspirations and opportunities. The questions being asked by individuals as they move through their personal development include:

1. What are my needs, interests, abilities, values and circumstances?
2. How can I use my special conditions to gain personal satisfaction through work activities?
3. How can I use my special conditions to make a contribution to our society and my fellowman?

Without a firm self-concept, it seems impossible to answer these questions satisfactorily.

Occupational Understanding in Career Education

Occupational or career understanding presents a different and perhaps more perplexing problem. First of all it is important to cause an awareness of all

the occupational opportunities available in the world of work and that any occupational activity can be done for economic or non-economic purposes. Child care for example can be done by a housewife for non-economic purposes and by employees of a child care center for economic purposes. Next it is important to allow individuals to gain enough depth in their knowledge of occupations to make meaningful choices. And finally, individuals must develop a set of skills required to enter and progress in a changing world of work.

As a solution to the problem of making individuals aware of the over 21,000 occupations, many systems for grouping occupations for study have been developed. Perhaps the one most commonly used today in career education is the clustering system identified by the United States Office of Education. It consists of the 15 clusters listed below:

Agri-business and Natural Resources

Business and Office

Communications and Media

Construction

Consumer and Homemaking Education

Environment

Fine Arts and Humanities

Health

Hospitality and Recreation

Manufacturing

Marine Science

Marketing and Distribution

Personal Services

Public Services

Transportation

Another clustering system was used by the American College Testing Program in their study of career development. The clustering system was designed to meet the following criteria:

1. The system must encompass the entire world of work.
2. The system must be appropriate for persons in various stages of career development.
3. The system must provide an overview of the world of work in occupational terms. That is, occupations should be grouped on the basis of similarities in job duties rather than by industry or by the psychological characteristics of workers.
4. The system must make it possible for students to identify occupations for exploration on the basis of their educational plans and personal characteristics, specifically, their interests and abilities.

The clustering system that resulted from the work at ACT has six clusters:

Business Sales and Management
Business Operations
Technologies and Trades
Natural, Social, and Medical Science
Creative and Applied Arts
Social, Health, and Personal Services[25]

Yet another clustering system was developed for the Comprehensive Career Education Model Project. This is perhaps the most complex clustering system

developed to date as it attempts to blend three different methods of grouping occupations. The basic concepts that underly the CCEM "Career Information System" are:

1. There be maximum interface with present sources of occupational information such as the Occupational Outlook Handbook, the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, and labor market information.

2. There be reasonable and logical flow of information through the developmental levels and that the complexity of the information increase as the developmental level increases.

3. That the system promote a common language about the world of work.

As shown in Figure 9, this model has three basic dimensions that interface with one another. The first is industry based, the second is based on occupational groups (commonality of tasks), and the third is based on worker characteristics (commonality of worker traits, attributes and/or other characteristics). The authors go farther to indicate that each dimension has basic uses. The industry base is best suited for general curriculum purposes such as occupational awareness and exploration. The occupational group base is best suited to occupational preparation; that is when an individual decides to embark on a skill development program, he would work from the occupational group. The worker characteristic base is best suited for general guidance purposes. That is, this base is appropriate for helping individuals match his characteristics with those of workers in an occupational field. Figure 10 shows the adaptation of the industry base of the model for various developmental levels. The other bases are also

FIGURE 9

The Career Information Model

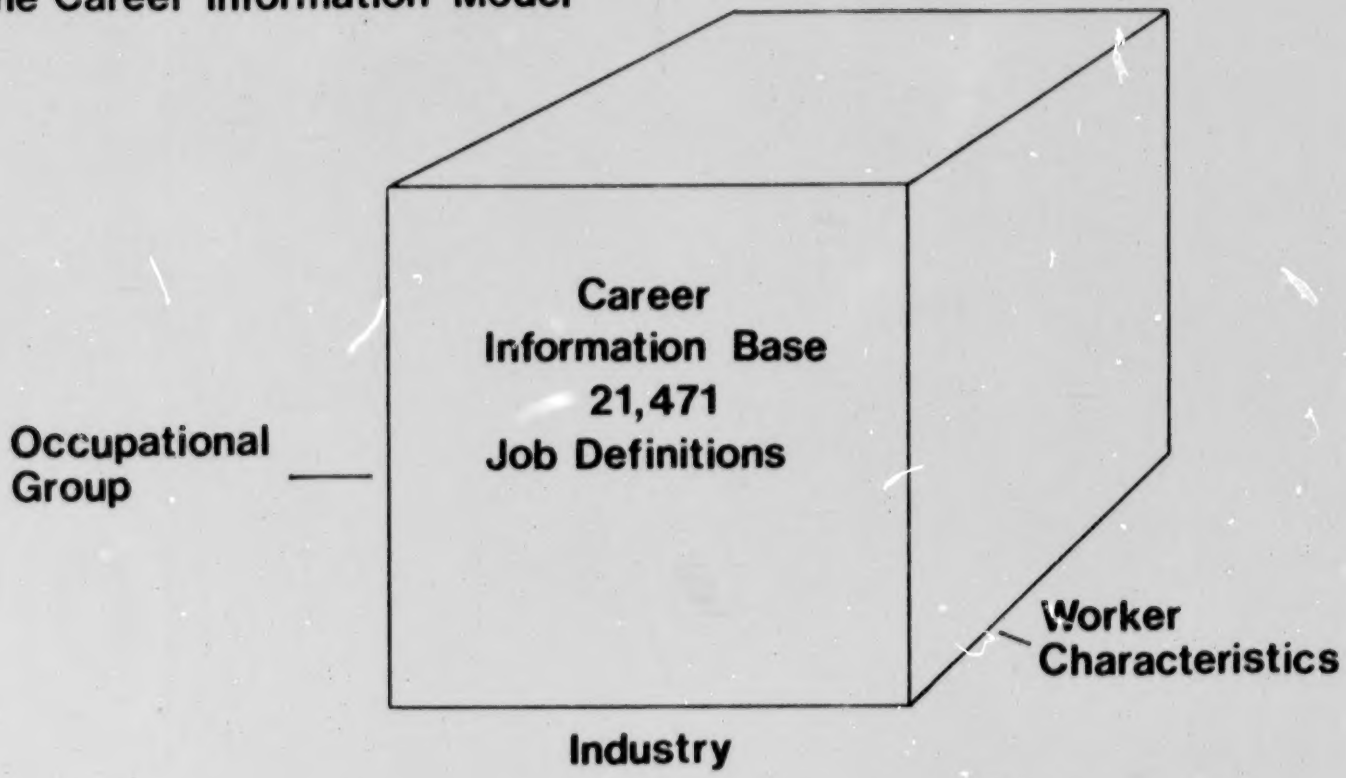
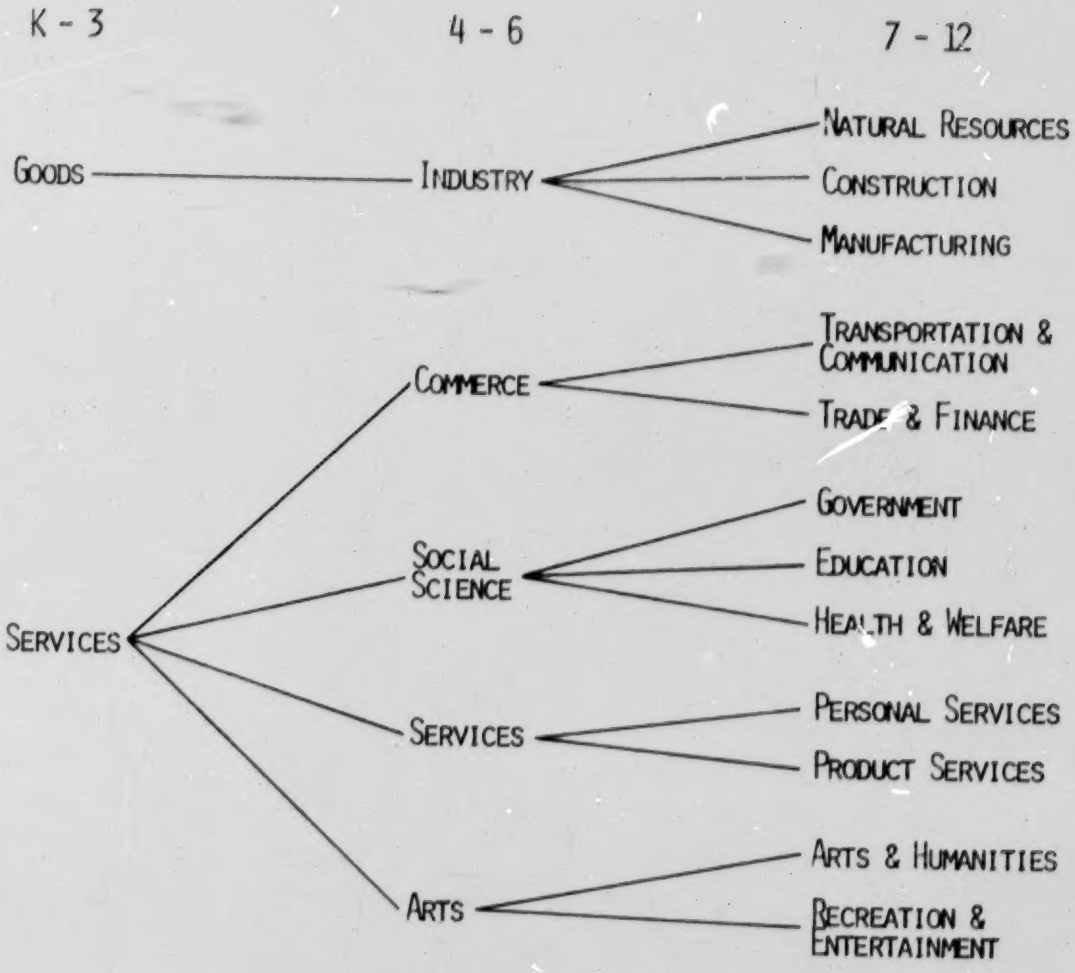


FIGURE 10

INDUSTRY BASE OF A CLUSTERING SYSTEM



adapted but they are not shown here.[26]

Exploration of occupations indicates development of a good deal of information about fields of work and perhaps even individual occupations. Exploration implies an active rather than passive role for individuals. They must actively formulate questions and seek answers through a variety of experiences. The closer the experience comes to duplicating the actual working situation, the more realistic will be the individuals understanding of the situation. As with awareness, exploration cannot be done for many of the over 21,000 occupations. A clustering system is again in order and the ones described above still work. The CCEM "Career Information Model" offers the advantage of exploring groups of workers from three different perspectives.

A good deal of exploration through school, leisure, home and other activities should lead to the establishment of preferences related to the world of work. Exploration should also yield knowledge of the skills and preparation required for entry and progression in perferred career fields. The logical next step is preparing for entry into a preferred career field. This may sound simple, but there are many entry levels and many occupations in a career field. Another important fact is that individuals will probably change occupations several times in his/her life. So, preparing is not preparing for a specific occupation, it is preparing for a career. In addition to entry level skills, an individual must be able to grow and change with the times.

As is the case with awareness and exploration, there seems to be a trend toward preparing for clusters of occupations or job families. This approach offers much greater flexibility in the world of work. The idea of clustering occupations for preparation experiences has been under consideration for many years. A leader in developing this concept is the state of Oregon. Oregon

surveyed the state to determine the occupations that were in demand and grouped them into thirteen clusters. The thirteen clusters are shown below:

Agriculture
Bookkeeping/Accounting
Clerical
Construction
Electrical/Electronics
Food Services
Forest Products
Health Occupations
Industrial Mechanics
Marketing
Metals
Steno/Secretarial
Service Occupations

In Oregon, school districts are using the clusters or some adaptation of them for awareness, exploration and preparation.

The Skyline Career Development Center in Dallas, Texas is another example of use of clusters for career preparation. According to the Center's Bulletin:

> Skyline Career Development Center is organized into Career Clusters. Each cluster encompasses several families of careers. These families are in turn made up of many specific career options. In most cases a student spends three hours daily working within a Career Cluster. His needs and specific career interest help determine his individual course of study and how much time he spends on individual tasks.[27]

The Skyline Center offers options in 26 career clusters, so they will not be named here. Rather, it seems appropriate to show the options available in one cluster. The description of the performing arts cluster states that:

> The Performing Arts Cluster is divided into three distinct areas: Music, Dance, and Theater Arts. In applying for this cluster, a student must indicate a particular interest and area of talent.[28]

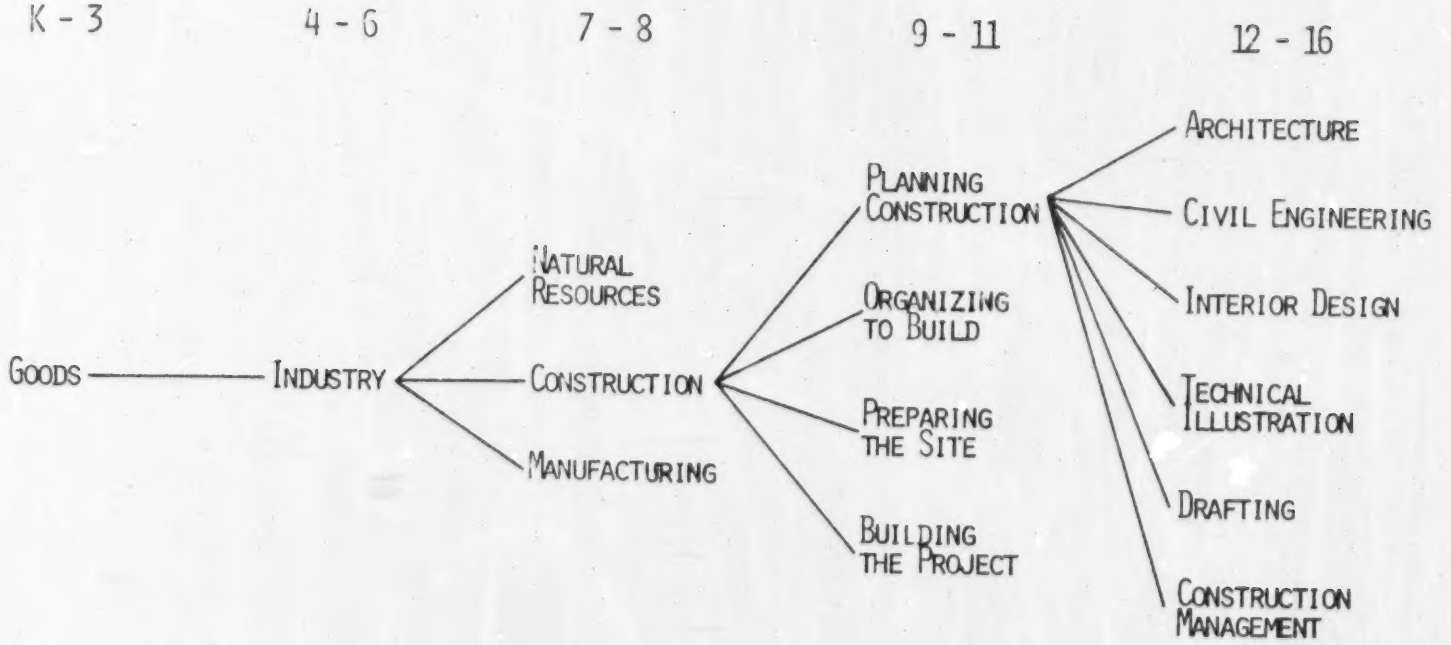
The description also includes a list of career opportunities. Included are the following:

Professional Musician
Director
Professional Dancer
Arranger
Stage Manager
Actor
Conductor
Teacher
Composer
Costume Designer

A flow diagram of how a good clustering system can assist individuals through awareness, exploration, preparation and placement is shown in Figure 11. An adequate clustering system for occupational understanding that includes the entire world of work and takes into account labor information coupled with good self-understanding will maximize chances for self-fulfillment and fulfillment of societal needs.

FIGURE 11

OPTIONS IN A CLUSTER AT VARIOUS EDUCATIONAL LEVELS



This presentation has not dealt with some of the elements of career education, developing general skills, career planning, and pursuing career plans. This does not indicate less importance for these elements. It is only because of the nature of the assignment that they were only mentioned.

Summary

In this presentation, it has been shown that career education began as a nebulous idea and is evolving into a fairly well defined concept. From a review of several major works in the area of career education goals and objectives, five main elements were identified:

- Developing self-understanding
- Developing career or occupational understanding
- Developing general skills
- Establishing career plans
- Pursuing career plans

The elements were shown to be in accord with early discussions about career education. The elements were also related to developmental stages of individuals.

Self-understanding was shown to be a crucial element in career education, if indeed career education deals with self-fulfillment. Occupational understanding was discussed in terms of how to handle the complex problem of relating individuals to the wide variety of opportunities through awareness, exploration and preparation. And finally some examples were given of current uses of clustering systems.

Career education has the potential for making the changes envisioned by Dr. Marland. However, it must have focus and direction. It will not achieve its place in education if it attempts to be all things to all people.

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